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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000936

SIPDIS

AIDAC

STATE FOR AF/S FOR KRAFT AND DELISI

NSC FOR SENIOR DIRECTOR FRAZER

USAID/W FOR A/AID; AFR/SA FOR COPSON, WILLIAMS, POE AND
HAGELMAN; AFR/SD FOR WHELAN; DCHA/FFP FOR PETERSEN,
CARLSON, SKORIC AND BRAUSE; DCHA/OFDA FOR BRYAN, HANDAGLE
AND MARX

GENEVA PLEASE PASS TO OFDAG, IFRC

ROME PLEASE PASS TO FODAG

NAIROBI PLEASE PASS TO USAID/REDSO/ARO

PRETORIA PLEASE PASS TO USDA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#)

SUBJECT: POLITICAL ABUSE OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

SENSITIVE, BUT UNCLASSIFIED, NOT FOR INTERNET DISSEMINATION

1. RECENT REPORTS INDICATE WIDESPREAD ABUSE IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AND OTHER HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (AND SOCIAL SERVICES, PRINCIPALLY IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PROGRAMS, IN ZIMBABWE. REPORTS INDICATE THAT THIS PRACTICE IS PARTICULARLY ACUTE IN THOSE AREAS DOMINATED BY RULING PARTY INTERESTS (E.G., MBERENGWA EAST IN MASVINGO PROVINCE). WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS (E.G., CARE SUPPLEMENTARY CHILD FEEDING PROGRAM IN MBERENGWA EAST), SUCH DISCRIMINATORY AID ARGETING/DISTRIBUTION PRACTICES DO NOT APPEAR TO BE A MAJOR PROBLEM IN DONOR-ASSISTED PROGRAMS TO DATE. HOWEVER, AS THE COUNTRY FOOD SECURITY SITUATION CONTINUES TO WORSEN, EXTREME VIGILANCE WILL BE REQUIRED BY ALL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTING AGENTS TO ENSURE THAT THIS DEPLORABLE PRACTICE IS NOT PERMITTED TO OCCUR. END SUMMARY.

"THIS IS ZANU FOOD -- LET TSVANGIRAI FEED YOU"

2. SEVERAL REPORTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED RECENTLY OF POLITICAL ABUSE OF HUMANITARIAN (ESPECIALLY FOOD) ASSISTANCE BY RULING PARTY INTERESTS IN ZIMBABWE. THE MOST GLARING EXAMPLE HAS OCCURRED IN MBERENGWA EAST IN MASVINGO PROVINCE WITH NUMEROUS DOCUMENTED CASES OF OUTRIGHT DENIAL OR RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FOOD, WATER, HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES (SCHOOLS) TO SUPPORTERS AND CHILDREN OF SUPPORTERS OF THE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) BY LOCAL RULING PARTY SUPPORTERS (INCLUDING LOCAL PARTY COUNCILORS, TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICERS, WAR VETS, MILITIA YOUTH, ETC.). IN THIS DISTRICT, "MASSIVE" DENIAL OF ACCESS TO FOOD HAS BEEN REPORTED IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED FOOD DISTRIBUTION, CHILD FEEDING AND FOOD-FOR-WORK/CASH AID PROGRAMS AS WELL AS IN THE PARASTATAL GRAIN MARKETING BOARD'S (GMB) COMMERCIAL FOOD SALES AND LOAN DISTRIBUTIONS. THIS DISTRICT ALSO PRESENTS THE ONLY DOCUMENTED INSTANCE TO DATE OF SUCH DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE IN ONE DONOR-ASSISTED SUPPLEMENTARY CHILD FEEDING PROGRAM (SCFP) CONDUCTED BY THE PVO CARE INTERNATIONAL (CARE). OTHER VICTIMS FROM THIS DISTRICT REPORTED HAVING TO PAY EXHORBITANT FEES EVEN FOR DRAWING WATER SUPPLIES FROM COMMUNITY BOREHOLES WHICH ARE ACCESSED BY OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR FREE. SEVERAL EXAMPLES WERE ALSO DOCUMENTED IN THIS DISTRICT OF CHILDREN BEING DENIED ACCESS TO OR EVICTED FROM SCHOOL BECAUSE OF THEIR PARENTS' POLITICAL PREFERENCES.

"SURRENDER TO ZANU-PF AND GET FOOD AID"

3. ALTHOUGH ACCURATE ESTIMATES ARE DIFFICULT, AVAILABLE INFORMATION SUGGESTS THAT SELECTIVE ACCESS TO FOOD IS FAIRLY WIDESPREAD IN GOVERNMENT/GMB-CONTROLLED FOOD AID AND COMMERCIAL SALES PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY IN AREAS DOMINATED BY RULING PARTY INTERESTS. A RELATED FORM OF THIS ABUSE, REPORTED RECENTLY IN RUSAPE IN MANICALAND PROVINCE, IS SELECTIVE WHOLESALING OF GMB FOOD TO RULING PARTY INTERESTS WHO, IN TURN, CHARGE EXHORBITANT ILLEGAL BLACK MARKET PRICES TO OPPOSITION PARTY SUPPORTERS WHO ARE DENIED DIRECT ACCESS TO THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED SOURCE OF SUPPLY. DISCUSSIONS WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF SOURCES INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS PRACTICE HAS NOT BEEN A MAJOR PROBLEM IN DONOR-ASSISTED FOOD OR OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO DATE, INCLUDING ANY USG-ASSISTED PROGRAMS OF THIS NATURE.

4. SOURCES POINT OUT THAT THIS ABUSE IS POSSIBLE AS, IN MANY INSTANCES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES DOMINATED BY RULING PARTY INTERESTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DRAWING UP AND MAINTAINING

BENEFICIARY LISTS WITHIN TARGETED CONSTITUENCIES. ONE VICTIM FROM BRUNAPEG IN BULALILAMANGWE DISTRICT REPORTED A REQUIREMENT FOR AN "OLD" RULING PARTY CARD TO BE INCLUDED ON SUCH FOOD ASSISTANCE LISTS, AS A NEW CARD DID NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT TRUE PARTY FEALTY. THIS PERSON HAD TO UNDERGO AN ELABORATE "CLEANSING RITUAL" BEFORE HE COULD BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR THE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS.

DUE DILIGENCE REQUIRED

15. DISCUSSIONS WITH THE U.N.'S WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP), CONCERNED PVOS/NGOS AND OTHER DONORS INDICATE THAT WHILE ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO PRESSURE DONOR-ASSISTED AID PROGRAMS TO DISCRIMINATE AMONG PROSPECTIVE PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES IN THIS MANNER, TO DATE, THESE PRESSURES HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVELY RESISTED (WITH THE EXCEPTION CARE'S SCFP IN MBERENGWA EAST NOTED ABOVE). HOWEVER, THIS PROBLEM IS EXPECTED TO BECOME WORSE OVER TIME, AS MORE PEOPLE BECOME FOOD INSECURE AND ARE NOT (YET) INCLUDED ON EXISTING BENEFICIARY AID LISTS. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE POTENTIAL FOR SUCH ABUSIVE, DISCRIMINATORY TARGETING PRACTICES FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE INCREASES. THIS SITUATION WILL REQUIRE INCREASED VIGILANCE IN VERIFICATION AND MONITORING OF ALL FACETS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ON-GOING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BY THE VARIOUS U.N. AND NGO IMPLEMENTING AGENTS TO ENSURE THAT THIS DEPLORABLE PRACTICE DOES NOT SPREAD.

COMMENT

16. THE MISSION HAS DISCUSSED THIS ISSUE WITH CONCERNED WFP AND NGO STAFF TO GATHER INFORMATION, RAISE AWARENESS, EXPRESS OUR CONCERNS, AND DEVELOP APPROPRIATE PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSES. PROGRAMMATIC OPTIONS DISCUSSED TO DATE INCLUDE THE NEED FOR POSSIBLE INDEPENDENT MONITORING OF SUCH PROGRAMS, AND DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON THIS AND OTHER FOOD/HA-RELATED ISSUES. THE MISSION POSITION IS "ZERO TOLERANCE" ON ANY HA ABUSES OF THIS NATURE IN USG-ASSISTED PROGRAMS. THE MISSION WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THIS ISSUE CLOSELY WITH WFP AND OTHER CONCERNED STAKEHOLDERS, AND FOLLOW-UP AS REQUIRED.

WHITEHEAD